



## NGC News

### A Letter from Mark Salzberg

The chairman of CCG reflects on the highlights of 2016 and looks ahead to 2017 — NGC's 30th anniversary.

[Read this article...](#)

### NGC Registry News: Annual Winners, New Sets and Slots

*By Collectors Society*

The 2016 NGC Registry Award winners have been announced. See the award-winning sets, and start building your Registry sets for 2017.

[Read this article...](#)

### Doubled Dies vs. Machine Doubling

The distinction between genuine die doubling and mechanical doubling can be subtle, but they can easily be differentiated with just a loupe and a bit of knowledge.

[Read this article...](#)

### Modern Chinese Varieties: 1987 Gold 10Y Pandas

This is the 24th installment of our monthly column devoted to modern Chinese varieties.

[Read this article...](#)

### NGC Accepting Submissions at Long Beach Expo

Submit to NGC at the Long Beach Expo, booth #431.

[Read this article...](#)

### NGC Ancients: An Exciting New Achaemenid Daric Variety

An unexpected "with arrow" variety has come to light.

[Read this article...](#)

### Counterfeit Detection: Altered 1856 Flying Eagle Cent

Date alterations are the most common type of counterfeit seen on 1856 Flying Eagle cents.

[Read this article...](#)

### USA Coin Album: The San Francisco Mint Coinage of 1941

When it comes to collecting 1941 San Francisco Mint coins, collectors have a choice of mintmark styles.

[Read this article...](#)

### Chinese Coins: New and Old, Again

*By Peter Anthony*

Buddhist thought is central to many Chinese coins, old and new.

[Read this article...](#)

### NCS Conservation: Scratches

A scratch is a type of mechanical damage that has moved or removed metal from the surface of a coin.



**NGC  
COLLECTORS  
SOCIETY**

- Submit directly to NGC
- Online submission forms and order tracking
- Memberships from \$39/yr

[Join Today >](#)

[Read this article...](#)

### From the NGC Archives: 1799 Draped Bust Silver Dollar

The collecting of early silver dollars has grown in popularity, and this featured coin has been described as “a great coin for the variety specialist.”

[Read this article...](#)

Visit our affiliated websites:



*Official Grading Service of*



---

800-NGC-COIN | [www.NGCcoin.com](http://www.NGCcoin.com) | © 2014

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation | P.O. Box 4738 | Sarasota, FL 34230

# A Letter from Mark Salzberg

Posted on 1/5/2017

*The chairman of CCG reflects on the highlights of 2016 and looks ahead to 2017 — NGC's 30th anniversary.*

Dear Fellow Numismatists:

I hope that the new year is off to a great start for all of you. For me, this year is particularly special because it marks NGC's 30th anniversary.

It is amazing how much has changed since 1987, when NGC first began operations.

In 1987, we were excited to receive 1,000 coins in a week. Now, we grade millions of coins each year.



In 1987, we employed three coin graders. Now, we employ more than 30 full-time coin graders.

In 1987, we had a tiny office in New Jersey. Now, we have a 60,000-square-foot headquarters in Florida, a 15,000-square-foot office in China, offices in Hong Kong and Germany, and Official Submission Centers in five countries.

There is one thing that has not changed since 1987, however, and that is NGC's steadfast commitment to accuracy, consistency and integrity. We owe our success to the trust that collectors and dealers have placed in our expert services and we firmly believe that our future relies on a continued adherence to these key principles. I am incredibly grateful for all of your support.

As we look forward to the year ahead, I wanted to share some of our highlights from 2016.

NGC and its affiliates, Numismatic Conservation Services (NCS) and Paper

Money Guaranty (PMG), accelerated their rapid international expansion. In November, our companies opened a state-of-the-art office in Shanghai that quadrupled the size of our previous office—which we had opened only a year earlier! We strengthened our relationships with key partners in China and forged new ones with other companies. It is a very exciting time for our companies in China and we are humbled by the incredible reception our companies have received.

Our offices in Germany and Hong Kong have also enjoyed a busy year as more collectors and dealers internationally learn about the benefits of expert and impartial authentication and grading. We look forward to growing alongside the hobby around the world.

In the United States and elsewhere, we have launched innovative programs for modern coins, in order to attract new and more diverse collectors to the hobby. Among these are individually hand-signed labels from some of the most recognized names in—and out of—the hobby, such as Elizabeth Jones, the 11th US Mint Chief Engraver; John Mercanti, the 12th US Mint Chief Engraver; Edmund Moy, the 38th US Mint Director; and the Gov. Hon. Mike Castle, the “Coinage Congressman.” Take a look at all of our signature labels [here](#).

Besides these individually hand-signed labels, NGC built upon the concept of officially licensed labels that it pioneered several years ago. These labels connect the hobby with major organizations and companies to increase interest in coin collecting, especially among new demographics. Our officially licensed Major League Baseball (MLB) Club labels and DreamWorks’ Kung Fu Panda labels were especially popular this year.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from modern coins, NGC Ancients had another fantastic year. NGC launched its NGC Ancients division in 2008 to attribute, grade and encapsulate these beautiful and historic coins. It has since revolutionized this segment of the hobby by making it far more accessible to new collectors. In fact, I have started to collect ancient coins as a result of NGC Ancients.

Coins graded by NGC Ancients continue to appear in greater frequency in auctions around the world, where they set exceptional prices. In August 2016, for example, a silver shekel graded by NGC Ancients sold for an impressive \$211,500. The growth of NGC Ancients has given us the privilege of examining many extraordinary rarities.

Our other departments also enjoyed grading some truly phenomenal submissions

this year. The D. Moore Collection, a diverse set of rare and exceptional world coins, was graded at the end of the year and will be sold in just a few days by Heritage Auctions at the New York International Numismatic Convention (NYINC).

Earlier in the year NGC had the opportunity to grade nearly 300 extraordinary gold coins recovered from the shipwreck of the 1715 Plate Fleet. Valued at more than \$1,000,000, this group contains such gems as an NGC MS 66 Peru 1711-LM 2 Escudo and a Peru 1712-LM 8 Escudo graded NGC MS 64. We posted an [image gallery](#) of all of these coins, which I encourage everyone to look at.

We also certified the most valuable English coin, a 1344 Edward III “Double Leopard” that we graded NGC MS 62. This unusual denomination was struck for only a few months in 1344 and just three examples are known.

For United States coins, the most noteworthy was undoubtedly the Rev. Dr. James Gore King McClure Collection, which was assembled between the 1860s and 1930s and kept intact until its sale by Heritage Auctions in June. It was truly amazing to see Civil War tokens that the collector pulled directly from circulation during the Civil War! The McClure collection also included an 1895-O Morgan Dollar graded NGC MS 65+ that later sold for \$258,500, as well as a 1921-S Walking Liberty Half Dollar graded NGC MS 66 that realized \$188,000. We also posted an [image gallery](#) of the McClure Collection for anyone who would like to see it.

A close second to the McClure Collection was a cache of rare Early American regulated gold coins that we certified in February. These important pieces of history include five coins that bear the hallmark of the famed goldsmith Ephraim Brasher, best known for his Brasher Doubloons. The submitter of these coins thought they were unusual but was unaware of their rarity and value until they were attributed and graded by NGC. Finds like these have kept coin grading fun for me for the last 30 years!

While this past year had many highlights, our 30th anniversary year looks even more exciting. As always, the year begins with the Florida United Numismatists (FUN) Show and this year we will display an NGC-certified rarity insured for \$8 million: an 1861-P Paquet Reverse \$20 graded NGC MS 67. We are also excited to host John Mercanti and Edmund Moy at our booth to sign portraits for free for show attendees.

The following week, the NYINC will be dominated by NGC-certified ancient and world rarities, including an NGC-certified 1880 Japan Proof Set, a number of exceptional British rarities, the D. Moore Collection and hundreds of coins graded



by NGC Ancients. I cannot wait to see the results. Early this year, we will also release a new mobile app in English and Chinese to make NGC’s research information even more accessible to collectors and dealers. We are also working on a major project to enhance the NGC Registry, the popular online tool that allows collectors to display their coins and compete with others for the best sets. These investments in technologies, coupled with innovative certification programs, help to bring new people into the hobby and expand it around the world. The last 30 years have been such a dynamic time for NGC and for the hobby, but I am even more excited about what the future holds. I look forward to growing along with the hobby and celebrating our next milestones, while staying true to our founding principles of accuracy, consistency and integrity.

Thank you very much for all of your support.

Best wishes,



Mark Salzberg  
Chairman

[Articles List](#)

*NGC is the Official Grading Service of*



[View All >](#)

*NGC is an Approved Grading Company of*





# NGC Registry News: Annual Winners, New Sets and Slots

Posted by Collectors Society on 1/10/2017

*The 2016 NGC Registry Award winners have been announced. See the award-winning sets, and start building your Registry sets for 2017.*

A big congratulations to our 2016 NGC Registry Annual Award winners and a huge thank you to all participants. This year's award recipients, announced on Friday, January 6, 2017, can be found [here](#).



To all of our participants, do you have any empty slots that need filling or coins you would like to upgrade in any of your sets? It's not too early to start planning for the 2017 awards period. We are planning on 2017 being the brightest year yet for the NGC Registry. Stay tuned for exciting additions and updates to our web sites.

These are the newest NGC Registry sets and slots, ready for you right now:

## New Sets:

- Canada - Commemorative: Silver \$20, 2017, Proof
- China - Panda: Silver 10Y Panda (1 ounce), 1989-1996, Proof (Incl. Varieties)
- Cuba: Peso Type Set, 2001-Date, Mint State
- Cuba: Silver 20 Pesos, 1977-Date
- Cuba: Silver 10 Pesos, 1980-Date, Mint State
- Cuba: Silver 5 Pesos, 1980-Date, Proof
- Cuba: Silver 5 Pesos, 1980-Date, Mint State
- Cuba: Gold 5 Pesos, 2005-Date, Proof
- Cuba: Gold 50 Pesos, 1988-1999, Proof
- Cuba: Gold 100 Pesos, 1979-Date, Mint State



- Cuba: Gold 100 Pesos, 1979-Date, Proof
- France - 1870-Date: Silver 10 Euros, 2009-Date, Mint State
- Italy: 100 Lire, 1985-1989, Proof
- Mexico: Silver 1 Onza, Libertad, 1983-Date, Proof and Prooflike, One-Per-Date
- Niue: Silver \$2, 2017, Proof
- Niue: Gold \$100, 1997-Date, Proof
- Tuvalu: Silver Dollars, 2016, Proof
- Tuvalu: Silver Dollars, 2017, Proof

## **New Slots:**

- Australia-Bullion: Kookaburra Silver 1 Ounce, 1990-Date, Mint State
- Australia-Bullion: Kangaroo Silver Dollars, 1 Ounce, 1993-Date, Mint State
- Canada - Commemorative: Three Dollars, Commemorative Issues, 2004-Date, Specimen and Proof
- Canada - Commemorative: Silver \$20, 2016-Date, Proof
- Canada - Commemorative: Silver \$25, 2007-Date, Specimen and Proof
- Canada - Commemorative: Silver \$25, 2007-Date, Specimen and Proof
- China - Lunar: Silver 1 Ounce 10Y, Fan, Series II, 2012-Date, Proof
- China - Lunar: Silver 1 Ounce 10Y, Series III, 2000-2011, Proof
- China - Lunar: Silver 1 Ounce 10Y, Series IV, 2012-2023, Mint State and Proof
- China - Panda: Silver Panda 1oz or 30g Medals, 1984-Date, Mint State and Proof
- China - Panda: Silver Panda Medals, 1984-Date, Proof
- China - Panda: Silver 10Y (1 ounce or 30 grams) Panda, 1989-Date, Mint State (Incl. Varieties)
- China - Panda: Panda Medals, 1984-Date, Complete
- China - Commemorative: 1995 Medals, Mint State and Proof
- China - Panda: Silver Panda Medals, 1984-Date, Proof
- Japan: Silver 1000 Yen, 2002-Date, Proof
- Mexico: Silver 1 Onza, Libertad, 1983-Date, Proof and Prooflike, Including Varieties
- Mexico: Silver 1 Onza, Libertad, 1983-1995, Proof and Prooflike, Including Varieties
- Niue: Silver \$2, Star Wars, 2011-Date, Proof
- Niue: Silver \$2, 2017, Proof
- Niue: Silver \$2, 2006-Date, Proof and Prooflike
- Niue: Silver \$8, 2014-Date, Proof and Prooflike
- Niue: Gold \$2.50, 2016-Date, Proof

- Niue: Gold \$25, 2014-Date, Proof
- Niue: Gold \$250, 1987-Date, Proof
- Thailand: Silver Commemoratives Type Set, 2002 - Date, Complete
- Thailand: 50 Baht, 1971 - Date, Complete
- Thailand: Rama IX, 2 Baht Type Set, 1979-Date, Circulation Issue
- Tuvalu: Silver \$5, 2002-Date, Proof
- Tuvalu: Silver \$2, 2014-Date, Proof
- Tuvalu: Silver 50 Cents, 2012-Date, Proof
- Tuvalu: Deadly and Dangerous Series, Silver Dollars, 2006-Date, Proof
- Tuvalu: Endangered and Extinct Series, Silver Dollars, 2011-Date, Proof

Do you have an NGC-certified coin in your hand and you're not sure where it may fit in the NGC Registry? We are here to help with requests and with other questions you may have. Feel free to send us an email and let us know how we can help. Reach us easily via email at [registry@NGCcoin.com](mailto:registry@NGCcoin.com).

If you're not familiar with the [NGC Registry](#), take some time to explore it, and see the many collecting options that are available. It is completely free. If you have any questions, you may also click below for our help page:

## [NGC COLLECTION MANAGER and REGISTRY HELP -- Table of Contents](#)

### [Articles List](#)

*NGC is the Official Grading Service of*

AMERICAN  
NUMISMATIC  
ASSOCIATION



SIXBID.COM  
EXPERTS IN NUMISMATIC AUCTIONS

VCoins

ebay

View All >

*NGC is an Approved Grading Company of*



NCS®

PMG®

CGC®

CCS®

ASG™

CERTIFIED  
COLLECTIBLES  
GROUP®

COLLECTORS  
SOCIETY



# Doubled Dies vs. Machine Doubling

Posted on 1/10/2017

*The distinction between genuine die doubling and mechanical doubling can be subtle, but they can easily be differentiated with just a loupe and a bit of knowledge.*

One of the more common questions that NGC Customer Service receives is regarding the difference between a doubled die and machine doubling. This distinction is very important, because a doubled die variety may be worth a large premium, while machine doubling is a mere novelty and does not usually add value.

A true doubled die is a variety in that it is created during the die making process. As a result, the doubling will appear on every coin struck from that die. In the past, doubled die errors were often much more dramatic due to the process in which dies were created. This method often required multiple impressions from a working hub to impart the detail into a die. If the hub or die shifted at all during this process, the finished die would feature two distinct impressions with separation between them. The design, letters and digits will be doubled.



1955 Doubled Die Obverse Lincoln Cent

One of the most famous doubled die coins is, of course, the 1955 Lincoln Cent with a doubled die obverse. It is extremely rare that such dramatic doubling would slip through unnoticed at the US Mint. At the time, the Philadelphia Mint was running two 12-hour shifts in order to help alleviate a cent shortage. At least seven people were supposed to have inspected the die before it was put into use, but that clearly was not the case here. Instead, the die was placed in service for a midnight to 8:00 am shift. The problem was not discovered until some 20,000-24,000 cents had already been mixed in with the millions of other cents struck that night. The Chief Coiner of the Philadelphia Mint, Sydney C. Engel, decided to let the coins through instead of melting a total of approximately 10 million cents to contain them. Those 1955 Doubled Die Obverse Lincoln cents are now one of the most sought-after varieties in coin collecting.

On the other hand, there is mechanical doubling. This type of doubling, which is also known as strike, ejection, shelf or shift doubling, is not the result of the design on the die being doubled. Rather, this type of doubling occurs when the die strikes a planchet. If the die is not properly seated, it can move slightly or bounce during the moment of striking, creating a flat, shelf-like doubling. This effect will be different on all coins struck, so it is technically not a variety, but rather more of a striking error.



Example of machine or strike doubling  
*Click images to enlarge.*

Above is an example of machine or strike doubling. Notice how the doubling is very flat in appearance and there are serifs in the letters that are not separated.



Example of a genuine doubled die coin



Above is another example of a genuine doubled die coin (the 1972 Doubled Die Obverse Lincoln Cent). Notice how there is a clear separation between the serifs on all the letters. This proves that the doubling was created during the hubbing process rather than during the striking of the actual coin. Sometimes however, both types of doubling can be seen on the same coin, such as on the coin below.



1951 Romania 2 Lei with a doubled die and  
also mechanical doubling  
*Click images to enlarge.*



1951 Romania 2 Lei where the doubled die has been shaded  
blue and the mechanical doubling has been shaded red  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The above coin is a 1951 Romania 2 Lei. There is very pronounced doubling on all the numerals in the date. However, this coin also has mechanical doubling! In the second photo, the doubled die has been shaded blue, whereas the mechanical doubling is red. As you can see, the die doubling looks exactly like the primary numeral only shifted to the west. There is clear separation between the two, including split serifs. On the other hand, the red-shaded strike doubling is much flatter in appearance, and there is no separation between it and the main number.

Hunting for varieties can be a very fun and rewarding endeavor, but it is important to know what is truly a variety. Hopefully this article can help you to discern the difference between doubled die coins and coins with mechanical doubling.

Sources:



- Lange, David W. *The Complete Guide to Lincoln Cents*. Zyrrus Press, 2005.

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



View All >

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



Careers   Legal   Privacy Policy   Security Center   Sitemap   Terms   Affiliates   Contact

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States

# Modern Chinese Varieties: 1987 Gold 10Y Pandas

Posted on 1/10/2017

*This is the 24th installment of our monthly column devoted to modern Chinese varieties.*

The Chinese Panda coin series contains a large amount of varieties. We covered the rare Proof 1987 G5Y Panda missing the P mint mark in a previous article, and now we are fortunate to show a Proof 1987 G10Y Panda also missing the P mint mark.

Here are photos of a 1987P G10Y Panda with and without a mint mark (**Photos 1, 2 & 3**).



Obverse side of a 1987P Gold 10Y Panda  
with "P" mint mark (**left**) and no mint mark (**right**)  
*Click images to enlarge.*



Close up of the obverse side of a  
1987P Gold 10Y Panda with no mint mark  
*Click image to enlarge.*

The 1987 G10Y Panda coins were also issued by Shanghai (S) and Shenyang (Y) which are shown below **(Photos 4 & 5)**.



Obverse side of a 1987P Gold 10Y Panda issued by the  
Shanghai Mint (S) **(left)** and Shenyang Mint (Y) **(right)**  
*Click images to enlarge.*

All of these coins share a common reverse showing the date and Temple of Heaven **(Photo 6)**.



Reverse side of a 1987P Gold 10Y Panda  
*Click image to enlarge.*

Look for another interesting variety to be featured next month.

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



View All >



Careers   Legal   Privacy Policy   Security Center   Sitemap   Terms   Affiliates   Contact

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States



# NGC Accepting Submissions at Long Beach Expo

Posted on 1/10/2017

*Submit to NGC at the Long Beach Expo, booth #431.*

NGC will be accepting regular submissions for all service levels\* at the [Long Beach Expo](#), at the Long Beach Convention Center in Long Beach, CA from 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 16 - 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 18, 2017. Check with show staff for cut-off time. **Cut-off time may change due to submission volumes.** All submissions will be sent to our office in Sarasota, FL. Services include World Services, Ancient Coin Services, Bulk, PHOTO PROOF® and more.

## Special Note:

- Due to the special handling required, NGC does not accept submissions of the following coins at this show for regular service submissions to be returned to the NGC offices: coins for First/Early Releases designations, coins NGC requires submitted in original Mint sealed packaging, coins over 3.5" (90 mm) in diameter and .39" (10 mm) in depth, Coin & Chronicles sets, Coin & Currency sets, March of Dimes 3-coin set, West Point 2-coin set, San Francisco 2-coin Proof set, 30th Anniversary Eagles, 25th Anniversary Eagles, 20th Anniversary Eagles, American Liberty Series and 10th Anniversary Platinum Sets. These submissions must be sent directly to Sarasota, FL, by the submitter.

Questions should be directed to NGC customer service at [service@NGCcoin.com](mailto:service@NGCcoin.com) or 1-800-NGC-COIN (642-2646).

Visit our table for answers to any questions about the services offered by NGC. Please remember that NGC does not provide opinions or free evaluations of coins at trade shows.

NGC is the official grading service of the ANA and PNG.

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



View All >



Careers   Legal   Privacy Policy   Security Center   Sitemap   Terms   Affiliates   Contact

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation



# NGC Ancients: An Exciting New Achaemenid Daric Variety

Posted on 1/10/2017

*An unexpected “with arrow” variety has come to light.*

Starting around 520 B.C. the Achaemenid (Persian) King Darius I (522 to 486 B.C.) introduced a new coinage, initially just as silver sigloi, and later as both silver sigloi and gold darics. His second arrangement was continued by his successors until the Persian Empire finally was toppled by Alexander III ‘the Great’ in the 330s B.C. It is believed that the Persian royal coins were struck at Sardis in Lydia (in western Asia Minor) and that they circulated throughout many parts of the ancient world.

The designs on both the gold and the silver coins were substantively the same, and today numismatists divide these coinages into four primary types. The first (Type I), issued in silver only, features the half-length figure of the Great King (or – as others have suggested – a ‘hero’) holding a handful of arrows. The reverse of this issue (as on all darics and sigloi) bears the impression of a utilitarian incuse punch.



Siglos Type I  
*Click images to enlarge.*

Around 510/505 B.C. Darius introduced a gold daric to circulate alongside the silver siglos and modified the obverse type. This new design (Type II) features a full-length figure of the king in a kneeling-running stance, drawing the string of a bow as he prepares to release an arrow.



Daric Type II  
*Click images to enlarge.*

In 486 Darius died and was succeeded as king by his son Xerxes (486 to 465 B.C.). About this time, the coin types again were modified. The new issue (Type III) features the king in the same kneeling-running stance, but he now holds a bow in his extended left hand and a spear in his right hand. The Type III coins are subdivided into sub-issues (IIIa, IIIb A/B and IIIb C) based on stylistic differences, which further narrows the dating of the various issues.



Daric Type III  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The fourth and final substantive type (Type IV) was introduced in around 455 B.C., and again features the king in a kneeling-running stance, but now he holds a dagger in his left hand (instead of a spear) while retaining the bow in his extended right hand. Like the Type III coinage, Type IV is subdivided into different sub-



issues (A, B and C). Types III and IV were struck concurrently throughout the remainder of the 5th and the 4th centuries.



Daric Type IV  
*Click images to enlarge.*

Within each issue the types usually remained unchanged. A notable exception is a rare issue from the early phase of Type IV's when a small design element was added to the incuse punch (a lion scalp facing, a lion head in profile, a facing helmet). The reason for this is unknown.

Now, we may add to the known corpus of ancient Persian coinage a 'with-arrow' variant of the Type III daric, which came to NGC's attention with the recent submission of these coins. At present it is represented by just two coins, both of which were in the group submitted for grading. These remarkable coins show the typical kneeling-running king holding a spear and a bow, but in this case the king also draws an arrow (coins 1 and 2). Both were struck from the same obverse and reverse dies, and it is interesting to note that the reverse punch die was also used in conjunction with several other darics with different (normal) obverse dies (coins 3-7).



Daric Coin 1  
*Click images to enlarge.*





Daric Coin 2  
*Click images to enlarge.*

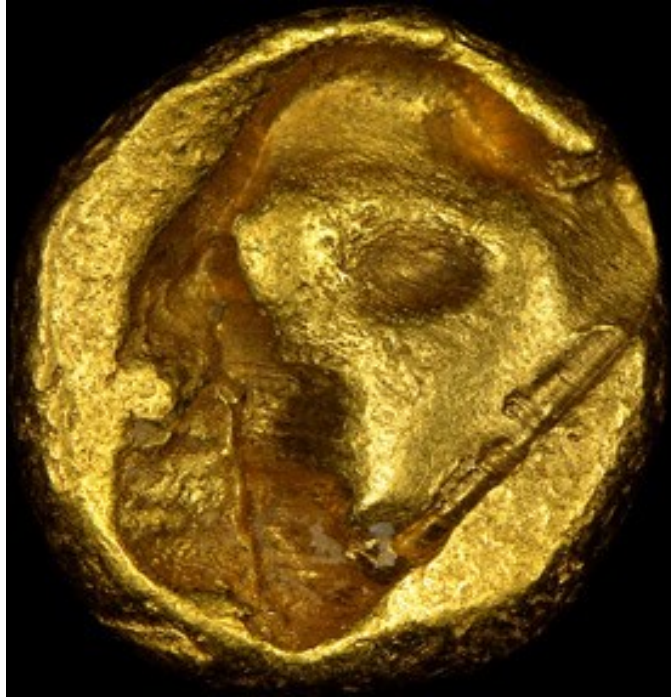


Daric Coin 3  
*Click images to enlarge.*



Daric Coin 4  
*Click images to enlarge.*





Daric Coin 5  
*Click images to enlarge.*



Daric Coin 6  
*Click images to enlarge.*



Daric Coin 7  
*Click images to enlarge.*



Microscopic examination confirms that the arrow was an engraved element, and was not merely a die break in a fortuitous position. Since at this point these coins are known from just one obverse die, it probably does not represent a substantive new type, but a variant created by a bored or confused die engraver. Should other examples come to light from different dies, or perhaps in silver, it might merit classification as a substantive new type.

It is possible the arrow was added to a die that – originally – had been engraved in the normal no-arrow fashion; if so, this could be demonstrated by the existence of a daric struck with this die when it was in its original form. Though this is possible, no such coins were present in the group examined by NGC Ancients.

Discoveries such as this are one of the great fascinations of ancient coins, for even with a well-documented and well-studied series like Persian royal coinage, new types and varieties are bound come to light at any time.

Interested in reading more articles on Ancient coins? [Click here](#)

*Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group and Numismatica Ars Classica.*

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >







# Counterfeit Detection: Altered 1856 Flying Eagle Cent

Posted on 1/10/2017

*Date alterations are the most common type of counterfeit seen on 1856 Flying Eagle cents.*

By 1856 the half cent and large cent denominations had become extremely unpopular. They hardly circulated since their large sizes were simply too cumbersome to be useful in commerce. In addition, their size and 100% copper composition made them expensive to produce and the US Mint barely covered its costs when striking the coins. It was clearly time for a change.

With large cents still being issued, Chief Engraver James B. Longacre created dies for a smaller cent with a flying eagle design in 1856. A total of some 2,000-3,000 pieces of this prototype—or “pattern” in numismatic terminology—were struck. Examples were given to legislators and the public was also able to buy pieces directly from the Mint.

Due to the extremely low mintage of the 1856 Flying Eagle Cent, as well as the interesting tale behind its creation, examples are highly sought-after today. Of course, where there is high demand and high prices, counterfeiters enter the market.

The most commonly seen counterfeit 1856 Flying Eagle Cents are actually altered date 1856 Flying Eagle Cents. The coin pictured is one such example that was submitted to NGC.



Altered Date 1856 Flying Eagle Cent  
*Click images to enlarge.*

At first glance, one might not notice anything wrong with regards to the authenticity of this piece. The surfaces appear a little unnatural due to cleaning, but that certainly does not mean that the coin is fake. The coin has the correct “large letters” in the motto on the obverse, as you would expect to see on a genuine 1856 Flying Eagle Cent.

The 6 in the date, however, looks slightly too small compared to the other digits of the date. That is because this 6 was actually carved from an 8.



Altered Date of 1856 Flying Eagle Cent  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The alteration is much more obvious in the close-up above. Notice the unnatural horizontal striations around the 6. Those are tool marks left behind by the counterfeiter as they carefully sculpted a new digit. This simple alteration made a coin worth less than \$100 appear to be a rarity worth perhaps \$10,000.



Genuine 1856 date on Flying Eagle Cent  
*Click images to enlarge.*

There are other variances that differentiate this piece from genuine 1856 Flying Eagle cents as well. Compare the date on a genuine piece (above) with the date

on the altered piece. As you can see, the shape of the “5” on the fake is not correct, which is most noticeable at the top and bottom. The genuine example also has a much bigger opening in the 6, which itself is much larger.

This is a common alteration that can lead to a very costly mistake for a buyer. It is important to carefully examine every coin, especially a key date such as the 1856 Flying Eagle Cent. If there is ever any doubt, buy coins certified by NGC, which are guaranteed to be genuine, from NGC Authorized Dealers.

*Interested in more Counterfeit Detection articles, click [here](#).*

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



[View All](#) >

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

# USA Coin Album: The San Francisco Mint Coinage of 1941

Posted on 1/10/2017

*When it comes to collecting 1941 San Francisco Mint coins, collectors have a choice of mintmark styles.*

The Great Depression of the 1930s witnessed some remarkably low mintages for the United States Mint, as the demand for additional coins ranged from low to non-existent from one year to the next. By 1940, however, the war in Europe (and the threat that this war would spread to America) prompted greater industrial production. This led to increased retail activity, and mintages figures rose dramatically to keep pace with spending.

The greater part of America's coin production in 1941 fell to the Philadelphia Mint, but numbers rose at the Denver and San Francisco facilities, as well. This column will focus on the west coast coinage, as it has provided collectors with two different sizes of mintmarks for four of the five coin denominations. These are highly collectable, and a few are scarce enough to command premium prices.

The San Francisco Mint struck some 92,360,000 cents in 1941. This was down a bit from the previous year, yet it was still six times the number of cents coined there as recently as 1938. Mint State examples of this issue are quite common, as the saving of current coins in roll quantities by speculators was well established by the mid 1930s. Many of these coins display blurry details from overused dies, but enough survive overall that a sharp specimen can be secured with a bit of patience and at no great cost. The vast majority of these 1941-S cents feature the Small S mintmark introduced in 1917 and used almost exclusively since that time. A few, however, probably no more than one in 20, display a Large S mintmark not used previously. This has come to be known as the Trumpet-Tail S to distinguish it from another style of Large S mintmark also used that decade, but not seen on 1941-S cents. Both styles of Large S would appear on subsequent Lincoln cents, but the Small S was never used after 1941.



Though well known by Lincoln cent specialists, the 1941-S with Large S is not listed separately in catalogs and has not been priced. Thus, it can still be cherrypicked with some ease. It's just a matter of time before this variety is recognized in print, and collectors should seek it out before that happens.

The total mintage of nickels at the San Francisco Mint in 1941 was 43,445,000 pieces, more than six times the number struck there just two years earlier. Finding a 1941-S nickel that is well struck from fresh, unworn dies will be quite challenging, as most are very disappointing in overall quality. Since the sharpness of strike is not a major factor in commercial grading, the assignment of a high certified grade does not guarantee a well struck coin. Collectors are advised to be very selective in seeking 1941-S nickels, as there are thousands of Mint State examples from which to choose.

This issue likewise may be found with either size of mintmark. The Large S coins comprise a very small minority of this mintage, and Mint State examples already earn a substantial premium among knowledgeable collectors. These are far rarer than the Large S cents, comprising perhaps one in several dozen 1941-S nickels. A few repunched Large S varieties are known, but they carry little additional premium, as the value of any Large S specimen is already quite high.



Close up of 1941S 5c Large S (**left**) and 1941S 5c Small S (**right**)  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The production of dimes also rose at the San Francisco Mint, from 10,540,000 in 1939 to 21,560,000 in 1940, and doubling to 43,090,000 in 1941. Coined in a softer alloy than that used for five-cent pieces, 1941-S dimes are more easily found well struck. Die erosion was a problem, however, as higher production led to less frequent replacement of the dies. Again, so many Mint State survivors are known that collectors can afford to be picky. Both sizes of mintmark may be found for 1941-S dimes. Though the Large S is more scarce than the Small S, its rarity is less than that of the nickel but greater than that of the cent. These coins carry a modest premium in Mint State, yet they still are unlisted in most price guides and



represent an excellent opportunity for the cherrypicker.



1941S 10c Small S  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The coining of quarter dollars rose in a manner similar to that of the other 1941-S denominations. From just 2.6 million pieces in 1939, production advanced to 8.2 million in 1940 and 16,080,000 quarters in 1941. Mint State examples are a little less common than for the lower denominations, but enough have survived to supply the needs of all but the fussiest collectors. Small S pieces predominate, while a lesser percentage feature not one, but two different Large S mintmarks. The more often seen of these is the Trumpet-Tail S, but one having a more triangular lower serif may also be found in rare instances. This is the same Large Serif S found on some nickels. Both varieties are highly sought, though the Trumpet-Tail S is not particularly rare.

Based on the above pattern, one might expect to find two different sizes of mintmark for 1941-S half dollars, but this transition did not occur until the following year. The mintage of 1941-S halves was only 8,098,000 pieces, and it's likely that enough old reverse dies were on hand that no additional ones were needed until 1942.

*David W. Lange's column, "USA Coin Album," appears monthly in The Numismatist, the official publication of the [American Numismatic Association](#).*

NGC is the Official Grading Service of

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All >](#)



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States

# Chinese Coins: New and Old, Again

Posted by Peter Anthony on 1/10/2017

*Buddhist thought is central to many Chinese coins, old and new.*

I met a traveller from an antique land  
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert...Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk a shattered visage lies...  
And on the pedestal, these words appear:  
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!'  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Near Datong, China. I look up and down a stone pillar, one of twin rows that flank my path. A stylized elephant just above the base holds my attention. Towering on its back is a 20-foot tall hexagonal column, the six sides decorated with seated Buddhas. Two small children clamber up to the beast and giggle as they stroke its trunk.

Liu Yang, my excellent translator explains. The pillars are reproductions. From 386 to 534 A.D, this area of China's Shanxi province was the capital of the Northern Wei Dynasty. 1,500 years ago, the Wei queen had a miraculous dream in which an elephant appeared before her. This dream foreshadowed the birth of a royal heir. Columns like these originally commemorated that occasion. In recent years the Chinese government restored this area to its former glory. The original scene must have been stunning. If not for the reconstruction work, though, there would be nothing to see here. The Shelley poem worms its way into my thoughts.

It is a warm late August day and the sky is gray with clouds, yet no rain falls. A



footbridge leads me across a lake to a magnificent, ancient-looking Buddhist shrine. Like the shrine, the lake is recent. This is a much drier land than it was 1,500 years ago. Then, a river ran along the base of nearby sandstone cliffs. Into these cliffs Wei artisans carved shrines to honor Buddha. Today we call these man-made caverns the Yungang Grottoes. The Grottoes are home to thousands of sculpted Buddhas that vary from a few inches in height to 49 feet tall.

The best-known numismatic tribute to the Yungang Grottoes is a People's Republic of China five coin set issued in 2010. The best-known coin of this set is a 20 Yuan 2 oz. silver piece. The obverse features a poetic rendition of the cliffs and shrine by Shenyang Mint artist Fu Lili. The reverse, by Zhang Changming, portrays an exciting piece of ceiling art called the "Flying Asparas."



Artist Fu Lili and her design for the 2010 20 Yuan Silver Yungang Grottoes coin.

Buddhist thought is also central to the Lunar New Year coins minted every year by China. It is told that Buddha once invited all the animals of the world to be part of a New Year celebration. Only a dozen animals answered the call. Buddha honored these twelve by naming a year after each of them. 2017 is the Year of the Rooster.

The Rooster is a symbol of honesty, as well as physical and moral strength. It represents good fortune, protection and fidelity, but also possesses a certain amount of pushiness.

Fittingly for 2017, there are seventeen Chinese Year of the Rooster coins. They vary in weights from 3 grams of gold and 30 grams of silver up to 10 kilos of gold and 1 kilo of silver. There are colored coins in 3 grams gold, 30 grams silver, 150

grams gold and 150 grams silver. Their artwork reflects China’s folk art traditions. The rooster images on the other coins are done in a naturalistic-style. Coin shapes vary from fan and plum-shaped to rectangular to traditional round.

These coins are a perfect numismatic beginning to the Year of the Rooster and will bring value and enjoyment for years to come. A tradition continues and what is old becomes new again. The Chinese New Year begins on January 28, 2017. Happy New Year, 新年快乐.

*Peter Anthony is an expert on Chinese modern coins with a particular focus on Panda coins. He is an analyst for the [NGC Chinese Modern Coin Price Guide](#) as well as a consultant on Chinese modern coins.*

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



View All >

NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



Careers   Legal   Privacy Policy   Security Center   Sitemap   Terms   Affiliates   Contact

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States



# NCS Conservation: Scratches

Posted on 1/10/2017

*A scratch is a type of mechanical damage that has moved or removed metal from the surface of a coin.*

It is said that it is better to prevent a problem rather than correct it once it has occurred. In much of our numismatic pursuits this adage is true. Environmental damage and PVC residues can often be corrected after they have begun, but other issues do not have such promising outcomes. Scratches are one of the afflictions that are not only irreversible, but also occur too quickly to mitigate.

A scratch is a type of mechanical damage that has moved or removed metal from the surface of a coin. Any attempt to cover a scratch will cause additional moving and removing of the surface metal, which results in additional damage. NCS therefore does not attempt to repair mechanical damage such as scratches or holes.

There are myriad ways that scratches occur. Many coins are scratched long before that coin becomes part of someone's coin collection. Normal circulation can cause wear and, sometimes, surface damage such as scratches.

Scratches that occur while a coin is in a numismatist's possession may be due to improper cleaning methods or an accident. In addition, a poor choice of coin holder can lead to a coin being scratched.

A few popular types of coin holders can leave a coin open to potential damage. Among these are the commonly used cardboard fold-over holders with a clear Mylar plastic window in the center to view the coin. These are often called "two by twos" by numismatists because they are usually 2 inches by 2 inches in size. Samples are used to seal this type of holder. Unfortunately, the staple ends may puncture the Mylar window and scratch the surface of a neighboring coin, or the coin may be scratched upon removal from one of these holders. To help prevent this damage from occurring, make sure to carefully compress the round ends of

the staple with small pliers so they are flush with the cardboard. A staple that is flush with the cardboard will be less likely to inadvertently harm a neighboring coin. When removing a coin from a cardboard two by two, carefully remove the staple before attempting to remove the coin.



An extreme version of a coin with scratches.  
A sharp object was clearly in contact with the surface of this modern 2010 Gold Eagle \$50  
left: Before conservation; right: After conservation  
*Click images to enlarge.*

Scratches can sometimes be hidden or partially hidden by residues and undesirable toning. While NCS conservation can safely remove these surface contaminants, it cannot remove any underlying mechanical damage such as scratches. Nothing NCS does will cause scratches to occur, but NCS cannot do anything to remove scratches.

Articles List

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



View All >





# From the NGC Archives: 1799 Draped Bust Silver Dollar

Posted on 1/10/2017

*The collecting of early silver dollars has grown in popularity, and this featured coin has been described as “a great coin for the variety specialist.”*

Silver dollars achieved a high-water mark in 1799, when some 423,515 pieces were coined. This mintage would stand as a record for the denomination until 1860, when just over half a million silver dollars were issued from the New Orleans Mint. This design was the product of a collaborative effort. Famed portraitist Gilbert Stuart furnished the artwork, while the modeling in wax was performed by John Eckstein and the engraving by Robert Scot. The reverse of this type is based on the Great Seal of the United States of America, adopted in 1782. On the coins, however, the arrows and the olive branch were inadvertently transposed, which, in the language of heraldry, suggests that the nation favors war over peace!



*Click images to enlarge.*

The collecting of early silver dollars has grown in popularity since the publication of the fine book by Q. David Bowers and Mark Borckardt. This handsome specimen appeared in the Heritage Auctions sale of January 1998. In that catalog, it was described as "a lovely coin, with original silver-gray surfaces and golden highlights." Heritage went on to describe it as "a great coin for the variety

specialist," noting that this variety, BB-154, was rated by Bowers and Borckardt as the second rarest of 1799.

Are you interested in learning more about these coins? Click [here](#) to visit the NGC Coin Explorer and read on.

[Articles List](#)

NGC is the Official Grading Service of



NGC is an Approved Grading Company of



[View All](#) >



[Careers](#) [Legal](#) [Privacy Policy](#) [Security Center](#) [Sitemap](#) [Terms](#) [Affiliates](#) [Contact](#)

© 2018 Numismatic Guaranty Corporation

United States